

REMARKS

Applicants have amended claims 2-11, and canceled claim 1. Claim 21 has been added by this amendment. Claims 16-20 were previously presented. Claims 12-15 were previously withdrawn. Claims 2-11 and 16-21 are presented for examination. Favorable reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants acknowledge Examiner's conclusion that claims 2, 3, 8, 9, and 16-20 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Applicants have amended claims 2, 3, 8, and 9 placing each in independent form including all the features of their respective base claim and any intervening claims. Each of claims 4-7, 10, 11, and 16-20 depend from one of claims 2, 7, 11, 13 and 16 and are allowable for at least the same reasons.

35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1, 2 [*sic*], 4-7, 10, and 11 were rejected as being anticipated by U.S. Pat. 4,433,264 (Nishiyama) or U.S. Patent 6,411,017 (Qiu).

As mentioned above, each of claims 2, 8 and 9, which were identified by the Examiner as containing allowable subject matter, were rewritten in independent form to include all of the features of the base claim 1. As amended, each of claims 4-7, 10 and 11 depend from claim 2, claim 8, or claim 9, and are allowable for at least the same reasons. Claim 1 has been canceled, and as such, the rejection of claim 1 is now moot.

Information Disclosure Statements

Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner provide an initialed copy of the PTO-1449 form submitted with the information disclosure statement filed on October 11, 2005.

Each of the dependent claims is believed to define patentable features of the invention. Each dependent claim partakes of the novelty of its corresponding independent claim, in light of the foregoing amendments, and, as such, has not been discussed specifically herein.

It is believed that all of the pending claims have been addressed. However, the absence of a reply to a specific rejection, issue or comment does not signify agreement with or concession of that rejection, issue or comment. In addition, because the arguments made above may not be exhaustive, there may be reasons for patentability of any or all pending claims (or other claims) that have not been expressed. Finally, nothing in this paper should be construed as an intent to concede any issue with regard to any claim, except as specifically stated in this paper, and the amendment of any claim does not necessarily signify concession of unpatentability of the claim prior to its amendment.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that the application is in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

Please charge any additional fees, not already covered by check, or credit any overpayment, to deposit account 06 1050, referencing Attorney Docket No. 14219-105US1.

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Respectfully submitted,

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